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To the Graduate Program:

This project, entitled ‘Strategies for Hispanic Young English Learners to Acquire a Native-like English Accent Pronunciation’ and written by Byron Carreno, is presented to the Graduate Program of Greensboro College. I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts with a Major in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.

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**STRATEGIES FOR HISPANIC YOUNG ENGLISH LEARNERS TO ACQUIRE A
NATIVE-LIKE ENGLISH ACCENT PRONUNCIATION.**

Presented to
The Graduated Program of
Greensboro College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in
Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

By:
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Abstract

The English language has some problematic sounds for Hispanic students to articulate and pronounce when learning to speak English as a second language at an early age. Although both English and Spanish share the same alphabet letters in the written language, they differ in their pronunciation, causing considerable confusion when learning how to pronounce sounds in L2. English pronunciation is one of the most challenging skills to acquire, and learners should spend lots of time improving their pronunciation (Aliaga García, 2007). This project aims to help Hispanic ELs and ESL teachers with didactical strategies to know how to articulate and pronounce better the most intricate English sounds that the English language has through dynamic interactive activities on a website. Likewise, knowing the correct articulation of the most problematic English sounds can lead ELs to acquire a native-like English accent without forgetting their first language accent. Therefore, these student-friendly articulation resources encourage Hispanic English learners to improve their pronunciation to acquire a native-like English accent. Similarly, ESL teachers and parents should use these articulation strategies to help ELs to improve their pronunciation.

Dedication

I would like to thank God, my daughter, my wife, and family for their support and love throughout all these years of preparation. They are my strength and source of inspiration, so I dedicate this thesis to them. Likewise, I would like to express my gratitude to my mom who always encouraged me to achieve my goals.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Many non-English speaking immigrants believe that being in the right environment of a native English-speaking country and being in contact with native English speakers in a regular context are enough factors to learn English and acquire the accent of a native-like English speaker. English differs from Spanish remarkably, for example, in pronunciation. Pronunciation in Spanish dictates that one must pronounce what they read, unlike the English language, where one must know how to pronounce words according to each letter or letter groups having their unique sounds. A considerable number of Spanish-speaking English learners that come from many different countries in Central America and the Caribbean tend to use patterns that they translate from their first language to the second in order to speak English hurriedly .For example, one factor that we have that students struggle the most is in cluster reduction: "sake" or "nake" said for 'snake'; in liquid simplification: "bewy" said for "belly". Another is assimilation: "bibbon" said for "ribbon" or "plip" said for "flip", and another is, in most common final consonant, deletion: it is due to the majority of Spanish words ending in vowels (only consonants in final position > n, l, d, (tap) r and s). Undoubtedly, this happens when English learners are learning to speak English at an early age thus affecting substantially on a first stage the correct pronunciation of some English language sounds, as detailed before, in the second language (Jimenez, 1987).

Another factor that may be affecting accent acquisition in English is that there are some sounds in the second language that are not in the Spanish language. For example, the voiced 'z',

the voiced and unvoiced 'th' sound, and the '-ing', 'j', 'zh', 'sh' are sounds that English learners get easily confused when attempting to pronouncing the sounds correctly. Therefore, at this learning stage, ESL students feel slightly obligated to look for alternate sounds like the ones used in their first language-- leading them to fail and not to acquire an English accent like a native speaker from this early stage as expected (Bernthal, 1994). This tendency implies that this lack of correct pronunciation happens because the English language has its own rules and codes, making it incredibly unique.

As part of their learning process, teachers need to implement more updated teaching strategies to help ELs improve their pronunciation and young EL students need to have some functional interactive digital tools help them articulate the intricate English so that they can acquire a better accent during at early stage. As a result of these needs, we should consider other functional teaching strategies that include easy, practical activities to practice the articulation of intricate English sounds so that ELs can acquire a more accurate pronunciation in English, therefore, a better English accent as a native speaker from an early age without affecting their mother tongue nor their Hispanic accent.

In addition, these strategies with phonemic awareness for ELs must be student-friendly during the teaching and learning process of the English language for students with linguistic and cultural diversity inside and outside the classroom. These strategies need to be easy to practice that also their parents can collaborate from home to their children reinforce what teachers teach at school on a regular basis.

The main objective of these strategies for Hispanic students with parents' collaboration at home is to offer an extensive online practice through strategic articulation activities so that

students can use them in their daily learning routines whether inside or outside the classroom in order to acquire a native-like accent with a higher performance.

As a result of this need, I created an educational website with step-by-step practical phonetic activities where ELs can practice the most difficult sounds through some articulation strategies with didactic activities. English Learners can perform the activities to improve their pronunciation of the sounds that they struggle the most in order to obtain a better accent in English. After Hispanic ELs practice these activities on my website, they can tell the difference in their pronunciation compared to those who do not use my website, thus demonstrating considerable accurate progress between past and present.

Students' growth in pronunciation will be the detector to prove that these strategies work. Improvement in students' pronunciation will demonstrate that they will acquire their accent accurately in English without losing their first language, and they will feel more confident when using the second language in the terms of a more suitable pronunciation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The English language has some sounds that are hard for Hispanic students to pronounce when they are learning to speak English as a second language at an early age. Although both English and Spanish share the same alphabet letters in written language, they differ in their pronunciation remarkably, causing considerable confusion when learning how to pronounce sounds in the English Language. For example, Bear, Templeton, Helman, & Baren (2002); Invernizzi, Abouzeid, & Gill (1994) examined how the sound system of Spanish may influence the pronunciations and, in turn, the beginning writing behaviors of English-language learners who come from a Spanish-speaking background. Why is it that Spanish-speaking students learning to read in English may write “espoyo” when trying to spell a word like spoil? Why might a word like sub be written “sav,” or the written as “da”? As more students enter school with Spanish as their primary language, linguistic information that addresses these issues should prove helpful to understanding the strengths, as well as the areas of support needed, for this sizable linguistic community.

This chapter will review the difficulties that Hispanic English learners experience in their early school years when learning pronunciation. It will also focus on strategies for better pronunciation that do not meet with success, as well as the strategies English learners should practice better to acquire a better pronunciation with a native-like accent in English without losing their mother tongue.

Features of Pronunciation Learning and Accent Acquisition

According to Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016), pronunciation is “the way of producing the sounds that are used to make meaning when speakers speak” (p. 967). The most basic components of sound in language are phonemes, which are “individual sound units or segments, which.... sound different from all other sounds in the language” (Curzan & Adams, 2012, p. 63). Phonology seeks to describe the organization of a language’s sounds, how they relate, and how they modify one another (Curzan & Adams, 2012). Moreover, English pronunciation is one of the most difficult skills to acquire and learners should spend lots of time improving their pronunciation (Aliaga García, 2007). Understandable pronunciation is one of the basic requirements of learners’ competence, and it is also one of the most important features of language instruction. Good pronunciation leads to learning while bad pronunciation promotes to great difficulties in language learning (Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2012).

Moghaddam, Nasiri, Zarea, & Sepehrinia (2012) argued that pronunciation teaching has not always been popular with teachers and theorists. However, for communicating effectively, learners need to become proficient in using the phonological elements of the language being learned. This need is two-fold: learners’ pronunciation is responsible for intelligibility, on one hand, and it plays a central role in the way learners identify their membership in a special community, on the other. Pronunciation is the language feature which easily distinguishes native speakers from non-native speakers of languages in general and English in particular. Although pronunciation teaching has placed its much emphasis on the articulation of consonants and vowels in the past, the emphasis has recently shifted to a more comprehensive scope to include suprasegmental features. In addition to context, Derwing (2008) suggested that teachers should be aware of their students’ own perceived pronunciation goals. Timmis (2002), in a survey of 400 EFL, EIL and ESL students from 14 countries, found that 67% would prefer to speak

English like a native speaker. Fully 95 of the 100 adult ESL students interviewed by Derwing (2003) reported that they would like to pronounce English like a native speaker, many of them because they felt they would be respected more if they did not speak with an L2 accent. Other learners are interested in maintaining some aspects of their accent as an identity marker (Gatbonton, Trofimovich, & Magid 2005; see also Hansen Edwards, Chapter 9 of this volume). As discussed in a previous study, only a very small percentage of L2 speakers are able to achieve native-like proficiency in pronunciation, but clearly, the goals of learners vary, a fact that teachers must bear in mind when planning a curriculum that involves pronunciation.

Accordingly, [Gilakjani](#) (2012), stated that pronunciation plays a crucial role in language use, language development, and language learning. In the context of English language teaching (ELT), pronunciation is an integral aspect of communicative competence that can impact the desire to use the language, and the quantity and quality of input received, and the output produced. As a result, the interference of the native tongue with the target language is also said to contribute to the foreign accent in the speech of late learners. According to the unfolding hypothesis, the better developed the acoustic system of the first language at the time second-language learning begins, the more it will interfere with the second-language pronunciation (Flege, 1999).

Difficulties Hispanic ELs Face When Learning Pronunciation

Many scholars have different opinions about what the problems are when ELs learn pronunciation in English. Pennington and Richards (1986) described in the status of pronunciation in language teaching. More specifically, they contrasted the traditional phonemic-based view of pronunciation with a broader discourse-based view comprising segmental, voice-setting, and prosodic features. The contrast revealed a description of the nature and interaction of these three aspects of pronunciation that serve to raise issues which are then reviewed in a survey of research on the acquisition of pronunciation. They concurred that central issues are the influence of the first language, the acquisition processes operative in L2 phonology, psychosocial and individual factors, and the role of instruction (Pennington and Richards 1986). A broader focus on pronunciation in the context of discourse is suggested as the emphasis of both second-language acquisition research and second-language teaching (Pennington and Richards 1986). From this perspective, the effects of voice setting, stress and intonation, as well as coarticulatory phenomena each assume greater importance for teaching. The authors conclude that pronunciation should be taught as part of the means for creating both referential and inter-factional meaning, and not merely as an aspect of the oral production of words and sentences (Pennington and Richards 1986).

According to Zhang (2009) teaching and learning native-like pronunciation is one of the most complicated but significant features of EFL and ESL teaching and learning. Due to its complexity, pronunciation has been looked upon as the “Cinderella” of language teaching (Zhang 2009). The author remarks that EFL and ESL English teaching has focused more on the other domains such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing than in pronunciation. Then Menke (2010) declared that native-like pronunciation is necessary for membership into some

social groups and to be considered a legitimate speaker of a language. Language immersion education aims to develop bilingual individuals, able to participate in multiple global communities, and while the lexical, syntactic, and sociolinguistic development of immersion learners is well documented, their phonological skills are not (Menke 2010). Therefore, what Menke (2010) showed was that native-like pronunciation gives a sense of belonging and identity to English learners. It is accordingly very important to pronounce sounds in English correctly in order to acquire a better accent in English. Gilakjani (2012) defined pronunciation as an integral part of foreign language learning since it directly affects learners' communicative competence as well as performance. Limited pronunciation skills can decrease learners' self-confidence, restrict social interactions, and negatively affect estimations of a speaker's credibility and abilities.

Derwing and Munro (2009) reported that one of the most salient aspects of speech is accent, either dialectal differences attributable to region or class or the phonological variations resulting from L1 influence on the L2. They further noted that their primary concern is with the latter, because of the strong social, psychological, and communicative consequences of speaking with an L2 accent. In addition, they asserted that the decline of audio-lingualism led to a concomitant marginalization of pronunciation research and teaching. It was believed that pronunciation instruction could not be effective, in part because of the unrealistic goal of native-like speech in L2 learners, and also because of research findings that suggested that instruction had a negligible impact on oral production.

Jiang, Green, and Henley (2009) explained that learners who begin to acquire a second language (L2) in a naturalistic environment after puberty are thought to be constrained by biological age factors and to have greater difficulty obtaining native-like L2. However, the extant literature suggests that L2 acquisition may be positively affected by post-maturational

factors, such as acculturation. The authors examined the relationship between acculturation and L2 acquisition on Chinese–English late learners.

Colantoni and Steele (2006) claimed that native-like pronunciation is impossible in non-primary language acquisition (e.g., Scovel 1988; Long 1990). A few other studies, however, have refuted this claim (Bongaerts et al. 2000; Birdsong 2003). This research argued that, at least for some phonetic properties, second language (L2) learners' production may not differ significantly from that of native speakers.

Pronunciation Acquisition Solutions

Empirical studies are essential to improving our understanding of the relationship between accent and pronunciation teaching. However, the study of pronunciation has been marginalized within the field of applied linguistics. As a result, teachers are often left to rely on their own intuitions with little direction. Although some instructors can successfully assist their students under these conditions, many others are reluctant to teach pronunciation (Derwing, T. M., & Munro, M. J., 2005).

Magen (1998) indicated that the purpose of his study was to assess the contribution of various phonetic and phonological factors to the perception of global foreign accent. Two native Spanish speakers of fluent but heavily accented English recorded English phrases containing sounds or sequences of sounds that are characteristically difficult for native speakers of Spanish. Investigated factors included: those affecting syllable structure (initial epenthetic schwa, non-initial epenthetic schwa (-ed ending)); those affecting vowel quality (vowel reduction, tenseness); those affecting consonants (final /s/ deletion, manner (/tʃ-/ʃ/), fricative voicing (/z-s/), stop voicing); and those affecting stress (lexical stress and phrasal stress). English-speaking

listeners rated the extent of foreign accent of the Spanish phrases as originally produced and as edited acoustically. Listeners were sensitive to syllable structure factors, final /s/ deletion, consonant manner, and lexical and phrasal stress, but were not sensitive to voicing differences (Magen 1998).

Moyer (2013) found that research in second language acquisition (SLA) has long tended toward a ‘deficit’ view of second language (L2) learners, focusing on what they fundamentally do not know compared to native speakers. For phonology, cognitively oriented studies examine the ability to perceive L2 phonological contrasts accurately and measure the degree of foreign accent for speaking skills. The age of first exposure to L2 is commonly cited as the primary (neurobiological) predictor of success in phonological attainment. Similarly, Lawrence (2014) outlined that in a comprehensive treatment of the significance of sounding foreign for second language (L2) speakers, the author centers her discussion around research about SLA, on the one hand, and L2 instruction, on the other.

Jones (1997) outlined that materials for the teaching of pronunciation have changed significantly over the past 50 years from emphasizing the accurate production of discrete sounds to concentrating more on the broader, more communicative aspects of connected speech. For many commercially produced materials, however, while the phonological focus has changed, the teaching techniques and task types presented continue to be based on behaviorist notions of second language acquisition, largely relying on imitation and discrimination drills, reading aloud, and contrastive analysis of L1 and L2 sound systems (Jones 1997).

Lai, Tsai, Yu, and Hsu (2007) proposed that phonetic awareness is a critical and often neglected component in the learning of the English language. It is accepted that good pronunciation can improve upon spelling and reading abilities of children (Lai et al., 2007). The

authors in their paper described a multimedia (ML) learning system that was directed at children with the aim of enhancing their English pronunciation. The system used hidden Markov models (HMMs) to analyze phonetic structures, identify, and capture pronunciation errors. It provided children with targeted advice in pronunciation, intonation, rhythm, and volume that is equivalent to four years of instruction (Lai et al., 2007). The system was tested in an informal experiment that involved thirty-two elementary students that were divided into two groups: sixteen high and sixteen low achievers. It helped the low achieving group to significantly improve not only their English pronunciation but their spelling and reading abilities (Lai et al., 2007).

Mompeán (2008) showed that the linguistic/phonetic criteria deal with issues like the functional load of certain elements of accents (number and frequency of minimal pairs, phonemes and their combinations, etc.) and degree of equivalence of features between the L1 and L2, etc. Brown (1991) became famous for discussing these criteria to some extent. Teachers might reject a model that has many contrasts (e.g. between long and short vowels) that have a low functional load. Also, Abercrombie's suggests that it would make much more sense to teach Scottish English pronunciation as an EFL teaching model as opposed to RP, since the former has fewer diphthongs and closer orthographic links than the latter. This view is based on functional phonetic or phonological criteria (Abercrombie, 1956: 55).

Serrano (2020) showed that it is widely accepted that L1 influences the acquisition of L2 phonology during Second Language Acquisition. Models such as the Speech Learning Model (SLM) have tried to explain this process by defining bi-directional interactions between the phonetic systems of both languages. Szyszka (2014) concluded that language learning is a daunting process frequently enhanced by several factors, for example, language learning strategies deployed in an orchestrated manner (Oxford 1990). Similarly, pronunciation

learning may be supported by effective strategies used either separately or in logically combined chains. However, little attention has been given so far to the strategies L2 learners employ when learning the target language pronunciation, not to mention pronunciation learning strategy chains.

Conclusion

Eckstein (2007). In the last thirty years, language learning strategies have been used in the field of English as a Second Language (ESL) to help learners autonomously improve their English listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, language learning strategies have not been applied to pronunciation learning in a large-scale manner. Furthermore, Gilakjani (2016) claimed that teachers can urge their learners to monitor their own pronunciation and practice their speaking skills as much as possible in and outside the classroom. Understandable pronunciation is an essential component of communicative competence. Gilakjani (2016) suggested that teachers should set obtainable goals that are applicable and suitable for the communication needs of learners. Gilakjani (2016) also suggested that pronunciation instruction has to aim at intelligible pronunciation and teachers can actively encourage their learners' actual production, pronunciation awareness, and practice. Pronunciation instruction is very important because it is the main source of understanding (Gilakjani, 2016).

Lewis and Grant (2003) asserted that although pronunciation instruction can be sensibly integrated into many types of ESL/EFL classes, it is particularly relevant to classes where speaking is central. An old truism about spoken language is that the way something is said is frequently more important than what is said. The way something is said obviously includes such things as vocabulary, connotations, pragmatics of speech acts, and effective use of coherence.

But it also must include pronunciation, which, when inadequate, has been implicated as a major factor in comprehensibility problems.

Therefore, this literature review meant to review some difficulties that Hispanic English learners experience in their early school years when learning pronunciation in order for them to acquire native-like English accent with readiness. It is clear from the research reviewed that strategies that they practice at school to learn English sounds for better pronunciation and accent acquisition are not enough. Varasarin (2007) asserted that English is a vehicle for international communication. In order to meet the demands of modern society, English teachers need to pay more attention to the development of learners' competence and focus on a more effective and successful method. However, traditional approaches to English-language teaching still dominate some classrooms. Language teachers should not focus on reciting but should instead teach from their own understanding of language learning and help learners to gain more competence through confidence.

Although computer-mediated communication technologies facilitate the practice of genuine speaking, there is not a guide to instruct ELLs in how to effectively and purposefully use these technologies to improve their speaking skills. For that reason, it is necessary and relevant to create a practical website for Hispanic ELLs to practice the pronunciation of the most difficult English sounds outside the classroom using practical articulation activities after ELLs watch videos of the most difficult sounds they struggle. Since according to Lazaraton (2014), technology tools are important for teaching L2 speaking skills because they give students the opportunity not only to practice in real time, but also to reflect on what they produce at a later time.

Chapter 3: Project Design

English is a language that differs substantially from written text to pronunciation remarkably. For this reason, one of the factors that contributes to Hispanic EL students having a considerably difficult time when learning how to pronounce some specific sounds (phonemes) in English. Another factor that influences EL students not to articulate correctly is that there are some sounds in English that, unfortunately, the Spanish language does not have. Thus, I have found that when young English learners need to articulate these sounds, they try to look for alternate sounds in their first language, Spanish. And, as a result, it causes enormous confusion at the moment of pronouncing these sounds; therefore, English accent acquisition is more intricate for them. Furthermore, one last factor is that Hispanic young learners try to pronounce intricate English sounds by pronouncing them so hurriedly that their pronunciation seems to become more of an escape than a correct articulation of the sounds.

By searching the web for some digital interactive online activities to help young English learners solve their pronunciation problem, I found abundant online resources, but not sufficient enough to solve this specific issue that Hispanic young English learners face up in their everyday learning. Likewise, when researching more focused options to practice the pronunciation of intricate English sounds, I found that the possibilities are minimal or substantially limited. Moreover, it is also clear that the strategies used to bridge this pronunciation gap in terms of acquiring a native-like English accent within the function of pronunciation and not as a mere activity of the English language, have not been consistent and convincing enough. For this

reason, the didactic result that students need to achieve during their learning process of English as a second language at an early age to acquire a better native-like English accent need to be more, interactive, functional, and effective. Accordingly, a practical solution for young English learners to solve this considerable deficiency is to use a more focused didactical strategy so that students can watch a video on how to articulate the intricate English sounds that the language Spanish does not have. Students struggle the most when they have to pronounce them. An interactive webpage where students can appropriately learn how to pronounce and produce these sounds in a didactical manner. An interactive webpage where young English learners can practice sounds by recording their voices to check their pronunciation improvement. This site has to let Hispanic young learners record their voices as many repeated times as possible until they achieve better pronunciation of the English sounds. This site also has to be available at any time and from anywhere they have access to an internet connection. As a result, Hispanic young English learners can practice these sounds at ease to acquire better accents like English native speakers without losing their mother tongue.

This project's final product is a website with videos of English's most challenging sounds for Hispanic English learners, along with a station in which students can record their voices after learning how to articulate those sounds correctly. By having this interactive website available on the Internet, I expect that many ELLs and ESL/ EFL students can benefit from using them at little or no cost.

With this explanation, the website that I created has two interactive tabs that can provide young learners with step-by-step teaching videos of how to articulate the most difficult sounds in English for Hispanic young learners. The first interactive station on my website consists of a video with didactical instructions per each of the nine intricate English sound that students need

to learn to articulate in order to learn to pronounce each problematic sound. It is essential to highlight that students have to watch the video before practicing recording their voices in the second station. The second station on my website includes an interactive activity called "Sound them out". Here, young learners precise the moment to practice each intricate sound they learned to articulate in the first station. In this part, Hispanic young learners can perform their sound by recording their voices when having the opportunity to pronounce the English sounds. They can then check whether they are pronouncing correctly, and whether they are acquiring the pronunciation of the English sounds like a native speaker yet. This interactive educational website is for the extensive practice of the most challenging sounds in English that Hispanic young learners struggle with the most when learning to English Pronunciation. Additionally, it does not intend to correct speech disorders as its only purpose is educational and non-commercial.

Chapter Four: Project

This webpage is intended to simply have young English learners learn the proper articulation structure of the most intricate sounds in English for Hispanic students and how they can practice them at home to improve their pronunciation in order to acquire a native-like pronunciation at an early age. By having this webpage available on the internet. It is expected that a greater amount of Hispanic young English learners can benefit from it.

This articulation website is based on a few activities used by speech therapists and is not intended to replace the advice and suggestions of a licensed speech-language pathologist. Strategies and activities have been adapted to make them more student-friendly to Hispanic children, following considerably basic principles of Speech Therapy to improve the pronunciation of the most intricate sounds in English.

How to Use this Website:

One good way to start using this site is by having children choose one sound that they need to work on from the main list. I recommend starting with one sound at a time since it is incredibly important for them to start with one only at the beginning. Another good way to pick a starting sound is by choosing one sound that children typically learn at a younger age. Below is a list of sounds and the ages that children typically master those sounds in conversation.

Phonological Processes Chart.

Phonological Processes Chart.

Sound	Age	Sound	Age
p.....	3 years	t.....	5 years
m.....	3 years	r.....	6 years
h.....	3 years	l.....	6 years
n.....	3 years	ch.....	7 years
w.....	3 years	sh.....	7 years
b.....	4 years	j.....	7 years
k.....	4 years	s.....	8 years
g.....	4 years	z.....	8 years
d.....	4 years	v.....	8 years
f.....	4 years	th.....	8 years
y.....	4 years	zh.....	8 years

Source: www.speechandlanguagekids.com

INTRICATE SOUNDS IN ENGLISH THAT HISPANIC ELLS STRUGGLE THE MOST

Sounds not in the Spanish language	Alternate sounds used by Spanish-speaking children
*	t and d and both dentalized and unreleased in Spanish. b > for > v, "best" said for "vest" s > for > z, "fussy" said for "fuzzy"
z	t > for > +th , "tanks" said for "thanks" or s > for > +th in Castillian Spanish only.
th voiced and unvoiced	
ing	in > for > ing, "lookin" said for "looking"
j zh sh	j or zh or sh for > y in Castillian Spanish or some South American countries.
sh	ch > for > sh, "chow" said for "show"

Source: Www.Firstyears.Org.

The very first thing we want to notice as ELs facilitators is what sounds does the child have difficulty with. As non-English speakers, parents could not probably identify them easily. Therefore, if they do not need some help from a speech pathologist specialist to help them identify those intricate sounds, they can use this educational website to have their children learn and practice such intricate English sounds at home. Hispanic English learners can first watch here the articulation videos on the most intricate sounds in English for Hispanic English learners according to the list above. Children will learn properly how the sounds are articulated and start pronouncing English sounds as native speakers so that ELs can stop pronouncing the sounds incorrectly in the way that they are substituting English sounds with Spanish sounds. Also,

English learners can compare their pronunciation before and after they use this articulation website and realize how much progress they have made after using it.

Articulation Station

Teaching in isolation the intricate sounds in English that Spanish does not have so that English learners can improve the way of how to articulate the most intricate English sounds appropriately. The first thing we as teachers need to do when teaching sounds in English to our ESL students is to teach them how to say the sounds in isolation. It means that we want our child to say the sound by itself, not in a word or syllable after they watch the pronunciation of each hard sound.

The screenshot shows a Google Sites page titled "Els STUDENTS". The main banner features three young children smiling. Overlaid on the banner is the text "ELS ARTICULATION STATION" in large, bold, white letters, with a yellow horizontal bar underneath. Below the banner is a yellow section containing the word "Overview" and a paragraph of text. At the bottom right of this yellow section are several small icons: a person icon, a document icon, a video camera icon, a magnifying glass icon, and a cross icon.

Welcome to Speech Articulation Station: Better Speech articulation for Hispanic kids! My goal is to foster your child's speech development and help them to improve their pronunciation. Here at articulation station for Hispanic Kids, we believe that parents are a child's best teacher and there are many things that you can do at home to improve your child's English language pronunciation.

How to Use This Station (for both Parents and Students) – Methodology.

First, on the Articulation station, children choose a sound that they cannot articulate appropriately. Then children have to click on the play button and watch the video of the sound they need to learn to articulate correctly. After the children watch the video of the sound of their interest or need, they cannot pronounce correctly yet, they have to practice the articulation of the sound in isolation. Children practice the sound in isolation following the directions located right below each video of the most intricate English sounds, which means that children have to say the sound all by itself without adding a vowel. For example, if children are practicing the /t/ sound he/she would practice saying /t/, /t/, /t/ 10 times in a row after watching the video. The more accurate repetitions the child can articulate the better. When children feel more confident in articulating the phoneme, they can start practicing the sound in isolation and are ready to move on to the next station to start producing the sound of their interest. Finally, when children feel confident enough to produce the sound on their own, they have to move on to the practice station. At this station, (voice recording of the English sounds) children have to click on the ‘practice voice recording button’ that takes them to the site where they can start recording their voices in isolation so that children can automatically notice that they can already pronounce appropriately the most intricate English sounds on their own.

Reference: The Articulation Therapy method was first proposed by Charles Van Riper in 1978 in the book Speech correction: Principles and methods. The method has been refined over the years, but most therapists follow this outline when conducting articulation therapy.

Intricate English Sounds Articulation Station:

← → 🔍 sites.google.com/d/1L7Q709N5eh3evr4M8DHM84Xu3UpKyVww/p/17VmyGdRr56LTCAwZtxwdQCweEqfln8Si/edit

ELs STUDENTS Home Articulation Station Practice Station Q

ARTICULATION STATION

Teaching in isolation the difficult English sounds that Spanish does not have to improve young English learners' pronunciation.

The first thing we as teachers/parents need to do when teaching sounds in English to our Hispanic English learners is to teach them how to say the sounds in isolation. It means that we want our child to say the sound by itself, not in a word or syllable. This will help them to pronounce each hard sound for better performance and results.

Choose one sound at a time from the list below to work on the articulation of sounds.

/B/



Credit to: peachiespeechie.com/pages/peachie-speechie-videos

To produce the /b/ sound, use the following cues with your child.

- Watch My Mouth (this will help him see what your lips are doing)
- Put your lips together
- Make your lips pop
- Make your voice hum/Turn your voice on

Help your children push their lips together with their fingers if they are having trouble getting them closed.

Practice on your own: Now children practice saying /b/, /b/, /b/ sound 10 times in a row. Then they need to go to the station to record their voice.

/D/



Credit to Mister Clay. follow him: **Youtube:** <https://www.youtube.com/c/misterclayCDC>

To produce the /d/ sound, you can use the same cues as the /t/ sound, but your child will need to turn his voice on. Tell him this is the loud one.

Practice on your own: Now children practice saying sound /d/, /d/, /d/ 10 times in a row. Then they need to go to the station to record their voice.

/T/



Credit to: peachiespeechie.com/pages/peachie-speechie-videos

To produce the /t/ sound, have your child tap her tongue right behind her top, front teeth. If your child is having trouble figuring out where to put her tongue, use these techniques to show her the right place:

- Touch the spot right behind the top, front teeth with a popsicle stick or sucker. Then tell her to put her tongue in the same spot.
- Put a sticky food, like peanut butter or marshmallow cream, on the spot right behind her top, front teeth. Then, have her lick it off. When you are describing that spot again, call it the sticky spot.

Practice on your own: Now children practice saying sound /t/, /t/, /t/ 10 times in a row. Then they need to go to the station to record their voice.

/Z/



Credit to: peachiespeechie.com/pages/peachie-speechie-videos

For the /z/ sound, use the same cues a /s/ but this time your child will need to hum or turn her voice on. You can have her practice turning her voice on by humming a tune while saying the /s/ sound.

Practice on your own: Now children practice saying sound /z/, /z/, /z/ 10 times in a row. Then they need to go to the station to record their voice.

/TH/



Credit to: peachiespeechie.com/pages/peachie-speechie-videos

To produce the /th/ sound, have your child place her tongue between her teeth and blow. There are actually two versions of this sound, one with the voice on (like “the”) and one with the voice off (like “thumb”). Have your child hum if it is the voiced one.

Practice on your own: Now children practice saying sound /th/, /th/, /th/ 10 times in a row. Then they need to go to the station to record their voice.

/NG/ (“-ing”)



Credit to: <http://www.RachelsEnglishAcademy.com>

To make this sound, the jaw drops a little bit. The lips part and the back part of the tongue stretches all the way up to the soft palate. The tongue tip is forward because the soft palate is lowered, air comes up through the nasal passages. This makes it a nasal consonant. You can feel the vibration in your nose /ng/.

Practice on your own: Now children practice saying sound /ng/, /ng/, /ng/ 10 times in a row. Then they need to go to the station to record their voice.

/SH/ unvoiced



Credit to: peachiespeechie.com/pages/peachie-speechie-videos

I call this the quiet sound. To make this sound, have your child form her lips into a little circle and blow. If your child is saying /s/ instead of “sh”, ask her to pull her tongue back towards the back of her mouth.

Practice on your own: Now children practice saying sound /sh/, /sh/, /sh/ 10 times in a row. Then they need to go to the station to record their voice.

/ZH/ voiced



Credit to: Jennifer Tarle from Tarle Speech and Language. Follow her:
<https://tarlespeech.com/accent-traini...>

This is the sound heard at the end of the word “beige”. This one is not very common in our language but it’s produced the same way as “sh” except with the voice humming or turned on.

Practice on your own: Now children practice saying sound /zh/, /zh/, /zh/ 10 times in a row. Then they need to go to the station to record their voice.

/CH/



Credit to: peachiespeechie.com/pages/peachie-speechie-videos

This sound is produced by saying “t” and “sh” quickly together. This one is pretty difficult so don’t get frustrated if he can’t say it!

Practice on your own: Now children practice saying sound /ch/, /ch/, /ch/ 10 times in a row. Then they need to go to the station to record their voice.

/J/



Credit to: peachiespeechie.com/pages/peachie-speechie-videos

The /j/ sound is made by saying the /d/ sound and the /zh/ sounds very quickly together. This may be another one that is best worked on by a speech-language pathologist.

Practice on your own: Now children practice saying sound /j/, /j/, /j/ 10 times in a row.

Then they need to go to the station to record their voice.

/R/



Credit to: peachiespeechie.com/pages/peachie-speechie-videos

The /r/ sound is a very tricky sound to produce. There are actually two different ways of producing this sound, one with the tongue scooped like a bowl and one with it curved like a mountain. For each person, one of these ways will feel better than the other but you cannot force someone to say /r/ in the way that is not natural for them. What you have to do instead is figure

out which way they do it best. The easiest way to do this is to listen for any words with /r/ that your child says well. For most children, there are a few words that they can say with a good /r/ already, you just have to be listening for them. Once you find that word, have your child hold out the /r/ in the word so she can feel what a good word sounds like. Then, try to find other words that use /r/ in the same way. For example, if your child can say “car” well, try first to get other words that end in “ar” like “bar” and “far”. Once your child can do those, move to words that are similar, like “aardvark” or “marshmallow”.

Practice on your own: Now children practice saying sound /r/, /r/, /r/ 10 times in a row. Then they need to go to the station to record their voice.

After that, at the Practice station, children have to practice each sound in syllables by simply adding a vowel after the target sound; therefore, they have to be sure to practice the long and short form of each vowel as a rehearsal prior to recording their voice. For example, if the target sound is /s/ “after the target sound” would be “sa, se, si, so, and su.” This is called “initial syllable production,” meaning the target sound is in the beginning of the syllable.

Finally, children have to record their voice on the Practice station. Voice recording is a great way to practice and improve pronunciation. It is an effective tool to hear and notice if children are pronouncing sounds properly and if they can be understood with ease. Consequently, the practice station is great for voice recording and providing feedback to children in real time. Therefore, children can feel more confident by articulating the most intricate sounds in English that the Spanish language does not.

How to Use the Practice Station

ELs STUDENTS

Home Articulation Station Practice Station



How to use the online voice recorder.

1. Click the "Record" button to start recording your voice.

2. Speak close to your device's microphone and make sure the audio animation shows that your voice is being recorded.

3. Click the "Stop Recording" button to stop the audio recording.

ⓘ

Record Stop Record X

How to use the online voice recorder.

1. Click the "Record" button to start recording your voice.
2. Speak close to your device's microphone and make sure the audio animation shows that your voice is being recorded.
3. Click the "Stop Recording" button to stop the audio recording.
4. Your voice recording will be available immediately or within a few seconds after you record it.
5. Click the Play button to hear your voice recording and to ensure that your voice was recorded.
6. Do the same with the rest of the sounds until you realize that you can articulate without a problem.

The screenshot shows a Google Sites page with the following details:

- Title:** ELs STUDENTS
- Page URL:** sites.google.com/d/1L7Q709N5eh3evr4M8DHM84Xu3UpKyVww/p/17VmyGdRr56LTCAwZtxwdQCweEqfln8Si/edit
- Header:** Home, Articulation Station, Practice Station (selected), and a search icon.
- Content Area:**
 - A text input field containing the placeholder text: "without a problem."
 - A yellow button labeled "CLICK HERE TO PRACTICE YOUR VOICE".
 - A large blue circular icon featuring a white profile of a person's head facing right, with three white curved lines extending from the mouth area to represent sound waves.
- Footer:**
 - A note: "I do not own the rights of this site. Credits to: <https://vocaroo.com/>"
 - Navigation icons for back, forward, and search.
 - Links for "[Name]", "[Email]", and "[Phone number]".

Extra practice.

Instruction: Practice these sentence to consolidate what you have learned in the previous articulation stations.

/b/ 🔊 🔍 🔍 | 🗑 ✎

Betsy bought the baby a ball.

Exercises to articulate intricate English sounds.

/b/

Betsy bought the baby a ball.

/d/

Dan found a hundred dollars.

/t/

Tell Tom to return ten tickets.

/th/ voiced

Thelma said, “Thank you, thank you, thank you”.

/th/ voiceless

Meet my father, my mother, and my brother.

/ng/

The singer sang the wrong song.

/sh/

Sheila bought some shiny red shoes.

/ch/

Chester chose a cheap cheese sandwich.

/j/

Major John is a jet pilot.

/r/

Ron bought a red ruby ring.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Learning to pronounce the most intricate English sounds that Spanish does not have plays a fundamental role in Hispanic young learners' language development. Therefore, teaching English learners how to articulate the most intricate sounds in English like a native speaker has never been so important in Hispanic young learner's lives. Hispanic young learners need to improve their pronunciation to acquire a native-like English accent for better status and intelligibility, playing a crucial role in the way that they can be inserted in the community without difficulties. Moreover, an accurate pronunciation acquisition may help them improve their communicative competence, self-esteem, and identity.

Many English learners have been pronouncing English sounds with a lack of native-like English accent because they have not been given the suitable tools and strategies in order to learn to articulate the English sounds with accuracy from an early age; as a consequence, they are subject to acquire the English language pronunciation with a hispanized accent. As a result, considering the lack of didactical strategies and resources outside the classroom in order to acquire better English accents like a native speaker, I created a website with articulation strategies and didactical activities of the most intricate English sounds for Hispanic speakers to help them improve their pronunciation in an interactive and practical manner. The goal of this website is to enhance ELs' pronunciation skills of the most intricate English sounds by integrating technology tools and language learning strategies that language learners can use at home. Consequently, the final product of this project is an online interactive website that is

composed of an articulation station and a practice station where Hispanic young learners can learn how to articulate the English sounds they struggle with the most. On this interactive website, students can first watch a video on how to articulate the sounds before they go to the practice station to record their voice and notice their improvement. This online articulation website consists of strategies on how to learn to articulate these sounds first through didactical articulation of sounds videos. These didactical and practical interactive articulation activities are going to help students inside and outside the classroom to acquire a more accurate pronunciation with an English accent. This project offers extra-curricular articulation practice where children can learn with readiness the intricate sounds in English at home, so parents can feel confident when helping them practice at home.

Creating this project has been an enriching opportunity to respond to the need for ELLs to help them improve their pronunciation so that they can articulate English sounds accurately. Speaking in confidence, I can say that when I started my job as an ESL instructor and when I registered in my MATESOL are the two moments when I felt that extraordinarily strong conviction of starting to investigate profoundly why young Hispanic English learners did not acquire a correct pronunciation; why their accent sounded so hispanized; and why some acquired an accent in English as a native speaker. After many hours of research questioning ESL teachers, coaches, tutors, speech therapists, scholarly articles, and Hispanic English learners' everyday lessons conducted by myself, I found what I was looking for. Findings were not delayed nor wrong. What I found was that the English language has intricate sounds that the Spanish language does not have. What children do is to look for alternate sounds from their first language to translate into their second language. As a result, they acquire English with a hispanized accent

with mispronunciation of the English sounds because English sounds are hard for them to pronounce at an early age. In addition, many Hispanic English learners do not have a role-model at home to imitate or receive indirect or indirect feedback on how to articulate those sounds accurately. Accordingly, this led me to study in this TESOL program to know how to translate into a more academic context my findings for the sake of ELL students. It also led me to learn that there are more methods and pronunciation techniques to help children improve their pronunciation. Thus, the design of more didactical, interactive strategies with student-friendly activities on how to articulate the most intricate sounds in English for Hispanic speakers in order to help them acquire a native-like English accent was a priority for me.

Finally, it is time that schools make a change in their curriculum and start including more articulation-pronunciation strategies since Hispanic English learners need to improve the pronunciation of the most intricate English sounds to sound more like a native speaker from an early age.

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